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Aruba's English news leader and ultimate guide to paradise

Pittsburgh synagogue gunman has been sentenced to die in the nation's deadliest antisemitic attack

By P.Smith/M. Rubinkam
Associated Press

PITTSBURGH (AP) — The man who killed 11 congregants at a Pittsburgh synagogue was formally sentenced to death Thursday, one day after a jury determined that capital punishment was appropriate for the perpetrator of the deadliest attack on Jews in U.S. history. U.S. District Judge Robert Colville ordered death by lethal injection for Robert Bowers, a 50-year-old truck driver whose vicious antisemitism led him to shoot his way into a place of wor-

ship and target people for practicing their faith. "I have nothing specific that I care to say to Mr. Bowers," Colville said from the bench. "I am however convinced there is nothing I could say to him that might be meaningful." Grieving families confronted Bowers in court before Colville pronounced the sentence, describing the pain and suffering he had inflicted, and calling him evil and cowardly.

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A makeshift memorial stands outside the Tree of Life Synagogue in the aftermath of a deadly shooting in Pittsburgh, Oct. 29, 2018.

(AP Photo/Matt Rourke, File)

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Pittsburgh synagogue gunman has been sentenced to die in the nation's deadliest antisemitic attack

Continued from Front

Bowers, who chose not to speak, spent the entire hearing shuffling through papers and writing, and refused to look those he victimized in the eye, even when invited to do so. Several survivors spoke of lingering traumas — sleeplessness, fear of crowds and loud noises, and physical and cognitive struggles triggered by the 2018 massacre at the Tree of Life synagogue. But survivors and family members, several wearing yarmulkes signifying Jewish observance, also emphasized their resilience in practicing the Judaism that the defendant hated. Alan Mallinger, son of 97-year-old Rose Mallinger, the attack's oldest victim, told Bowers the synagogue would be rebuilt, the scene of future bar and bat mitzvahs and other rituals of Jewish worship. "We continue to thrive as Jewish people ... stronger

than ever," he declared. Bowers, from suburban Baldwin, ranted about Jews online before carrying out the attack at Tree of Life, in the heart of Pittsburgh's Jewish community, on Oct. 27, 2018. He killed members of the Dor Hadash, New Light and Tree of Life congregations, which shared the synagogue building. Bowers told police at the scene that "all these Jews must die" and has since expressed pride in the killings. Jurors were unanimous in finding that Bowers' attack was motivated by his hatred of Jews, and that he chose Tree of Life for its location in one of the largest and most historic Jewish communities in the nation so he could "maximize the devastation, amplify the harm of his crimes, and instill fear within the local, national, and international Jewish communities." They also found that Bowers lacked remorse. The jury rejected defense

claims that Bowers has schizophrenia and that his delusions about Jewish people spurred the attack. "Mr. Bowers, you met my beloved husband in the kitchen. Your callous disregard for the person he was repulses me," testified Peg Durachko, wife of 65-year-old Dr. Richard Gottfried, a dentist who was shot and killed. "Your hateful act took my soulmate from me." Mark Simon, whose parents, Bernice and Sylvan Simon, were killed in the attack, testified he still has their bloodied prayer shawl. He said he remains haunted by the 911 call placed by his mother, whom Bowers shot while she was on the line. "My parents died alone, without any living soul to comfort them or to hold their hand in their last moments," said Simon, condemning "that defendant" and urging the judge to show him no mercy. "You will never be forgiven.

Never," Simon told Bowers. It was the first federal death sentence imposed during the presidency of Joe Biden, who pledged during his 2020 campaign to end capital punishment. Biden's Justice Department has placed a moratorium on federal executions and has declined to authorize the death penalty in hundreds of new cases where it could apply. But federal prosecutors said death was the appropriate punishment for Bowers, citing the vulnerability of his mainly elderly victims and his hate-based targeting of a religious community. An appeal is expected, meaning that Bowers will likely spend years on federal death row even if the Justice Department lifts the moratorium on executions. Bowers, who was armed with an AR-15 rifle and other weapons, also shot and wounded seven, including five responding police officers. Sgt. Jonathan Craig, who

responded to the attack as a member of the Pittsburgh police SWAT team, recalled on the witness stand Thursday that Bowers "begged for mercy" after being wounded in a shootout with police — after he had shown no mercy to those he murdered. The gunman was convicted in June of 63 federal counts, including hate crimes resulting in death and obstruction of the free exercise of religion resulting in death. In addition to Mallinger, Gottfried and the Simons, the deceased victims were Joyce Fienberg, 75; Dr. Jerry Rabinowitz, 66; brothers David Rosenthal, 54, and Cecil Rosenthal, 59; Dan Stein, 71; Melvin Wax, 87; and Irving Younger, 69. The synagogue has been closed since the shootings. The Tree of Life congregation plans to overhaul the synagogue complex to house a sanctuary, museum, memorial and center for fighting antisemitism. □

2 US Navy sailors arrested on charges tied to national security and China



U.S. Attorney Randy S. Grossman for the Southern District of California, center, speaks during a press conference at the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of California on Thursday, Aug. 3, 2023, in San Diego.
(Meg McLaughlin/The San Diego Union-Tribune via AP)

By Julie Watson and Lolita C. Baldor
Associated Press
SAN DIEGO (AP) — Two U.S. Navy sailors have been arrested and accused of providing sensitive military information to China — including details on wartime exercises, naval operations and critical technical material, federal officials said Thursday. The two sailors, both based

in California, were charged with similar moves to provide sensitive intelligence to the Chinese. But they were separate cases, and it wasn't clear if the two were courted or paid by the same Chinese intelligence officer as part of a larger scheme. Federal officials at a news conference in San Diego declined to specify whether the sailors were aware of each other's

actions. U.S. officials have for years expressed concern about the espionage threat they say the Chinese government poses, bringing criminal cases in recent years against Beijing intelligence operatives who have stolen sensitive government and commercial information, including through illegal hacking. The pair of cases also comes on the heels of another insider-threat prosecution tied to the U.S. military, with the Justice Department in April arresting a Massachusetts Air National Guardsman on charges of leaking classified military documents about Russia's war in Ukraine and other sensitive national security topics on Discord, a social media platform popular with people playing online games. U.S. officials said the cases exemplify China's brazenness in trying to obtain in-

sight into U.S. military operations. "Through the alleged crimes committed by these defendants, sensitive military information ended up in the hands of the People's Republic of China," said U.S. Attorney Randy Grossman of the Southern District of California. He added that the charges demonstrate the Chinese government's "determination to obtain information that is critical to our national defense by any means, so it could be used to their advantage." Jinchao Wei, a 22-year-old sailor assigned to the San Diego-based USS Essex, was arrested Wednesday on a charge related to espionage involving conspiracy to send national defense information to Chinese officials, according to the U.S. authorities. Wei, who was born in China, was approached by a Chinese intelligence officer

while he was applying to become a naturalized U.S. citizen, prosecutors said, and admitted to the officer that he knew the arrangement could affect his application. Still, prosecutors said, he continued to send sensitive U.S. military information multiple times over the course of a year and even was congratulated by the Chinese officer once Wei became a U.S. citizen, Grossman said. He added that Wei "chose to turn his back on his newly adopted country" for greed. The Justice Department also charged sailor Wenheng Zhao, 26, based at Naval Base Ventura County, north of San Diego, with conspiring to collect bribes from a Chinese intelligence officer in exchange for U.S. naval exercise plans, operational orders and photos and videos of electrical systems at Navy facilities between August 2021 through at least this May. □

Pediatricians' group reaffirms support for gender-affirming care amid growing state restrictions

Associated Press

(AP) - Pediatricians' group reaffirms support for gender-affirming care amid growing state restrictions

The American Academy of Pediatrics reaffirmed its support for gender-affirming medical care for transgender children on Thursday, even as the treatments face a growing push for bans and restrictions from Republican lawmakers across the U.S.

The board of directors for the group, which represents 67,000 pediatricians, unanimously voted to reaffirm its 2018 position on the treatments. The board also voted to provide additional documents to support pediatricians, including clinical and technical reports, and to conduct an external review of research regarding the care.

"The additional recommendations also reflect the fact that the board is concerned about restrictions to



Glenda Starke wears a transgender flag as a counter protest during a rally in favor of a ban on gender-affirming health care legislation, March 20, 2023, at the Missouri Statehouse in Jefferson City, Mo.

accessing evidence-based health care for young people who need it," Mark Del Monte, the academy's CEO, said in a statement

released by the group, calling the restrictions enacted by states "unprecedented government intrusion."

"We therefore need to

provide the best and most transparent process possible," he said.

At least 21 states have now enacted laws restricting or

banning gender-affirming medical care for transgender minors, and most of those states face lawsuits. A federal judge struck down Arkansas' ban as unconstitutional, and federal judges have temporarily blocked bans in Alabama and Indiana. The judge who struck down Arkansas' ban cited the position of the groups in his ruling against the ban. Arkansas has appealed the judge's decision.

People opposed to such treatments for children argue they are too young to make such decisions about their futures.

Every major medical group, including the academy and the American Medical Association, has opposed the bans and has said the treatments are safe if administered properly.

The academy and the AMA support allowing children to seek the medical care, but they don't offer age-specific guidance. □

(AP Photo/Charlie Riedel, File)

Minnesota Supreme Court rules against disputed mine, says state pollution officials hid EPA warnings

By Summer Ballentine

Associated Press

UNDATED (AP) — The Minnesota Supreme Court on Wednesday ruled that the state's Pollution Control Agency improperly granted permits to a fiercely contested copper-nickel mine and concealed environmental concerns about the project, which critics say threatens to pollute Lake Superior and hurt tribal lands. The proposed mining project, a 50-50 joint venture with PolyMet Mining and Teck Resources, was renamed NewRange Copper Nickel in February but is still widely known as PolyMet. It seeks to be Minnesota's first copper-nickel mine, but it has long been stalled by court and regulatory setbacks.

The Minnesota Supreme Court's 6-0 ruling against the state's Pollution Control Agency once again derails the long-sought project, di-

recting the state agency to reconsider the permits.

Justices found that state regulators not only ignored concerns from the federal Environmental Protection Agency about the northeastern Minnesota mine, but attempted to conceal EPA warnings from the public. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency "and the EPA sought to avoid public scrutiny and to hide the risk of illegal water pollution from the public eye," Justice Anne McKeig wrote in a concurring opinion. In a statement, NewRange said it's "confident that the additional proceedings will confirm the project protects water quality for all, and welcomes working with stakeholders on the permit."

PolyMet has been trying to complete the open-pit mine near Babbitt and processing plant near Hoyt Lakes for more than a de-

cade, despite public criticism and other setbacks.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in June revoked a critical water quality permit for the project. The Corps said the permit did not comply with the water quality standards set by the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, whose reservation on the St. Louis River is downstream from the mine and processing plant sites.

Environmentalists have opposed the mine for fear it could pollute pristine waters and destroy habitat for gray wolves and Canada lynx. The project would be located near tributaries feeding the St. Louis River, 175 river miles upstream from Lake Superior.

Critics also cite the risks of acid mine drainage and concerns about the safety of the dam for its tailings basin. The vast but untapped reserves of buried copper,



A former iron ore processing plant near Hoyt Lakes, Minn., that would become part of a proposed PolyMet copper-nickel mine, is pictured on Feb. 10, 2016.

(AP Photo/Jim Mone, File)

nickel and precious metals in northeastern Minnesota are locked up in sulfide minerals that can leach sulfuric acid and other pollutants when exposed to air and water.

The latest setback comes after environmental groups and the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa sued when the state grant-

ed PolyMet mining permits in 2018.

Court discoveries from that lawsuit and open-records requests by Minnesota-based nonprofit Water-Legacy unearthed documents showing that state regulators had pressured the EPA to withhold its concerns about the mine from public comments. □

A man accused of locking a woman in a homemade cell had a handwritten plan and sketch, FBI says

By Andrew Selsky and Gene Johnson

Associated Press

SALEM, Ore. (AP) — He called it “Operation Take Over,” with a list that included a chilling reminder to go after women who wouldn’t be missed to avoid “any kind of an investigation,” according to the FBI.

Accompanying the bullet-point notes was a sketch of an apparent dungeon, to be built with cinder blocks, foam insulation and water-proof concrete.

Police found the legal pad with the notes in the southern Oregon home of a man who is now a suspect in sexual assaults around the country. Also in the home: a cinder block cell where police say the man, Negasi Zuberi, held a woman he had allegedly kidnapped in Seattle until she escaped by pounding at the door with bloodied hands.

Court and police records show Zuberi, 29, had been on law enforcement’s radar before — for offenses such as punching someone in the face and being a bad tenant whose landlord sought to evict him.



This undated photo provided by the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Portland Field Office shows the interior of a makeshift cinderblock cell in Klamath Falls, Ore., allegedly used by Negasi Zuberi. (FBI via AP)

The FBI set up a website asking anyone who believes they may have been a victim to come forward. The site says the FBI’s investigation has extended to states where Zuberi, who used several aliases, including Sakima, previously

resided since August 2016. Those states could include California, Washington, Oregon, Colorado, Utah, Florida, New York, New Jersey, Alabama and Nevada, the site says.

In the Seattle kidnapping on July 15, Zuberi solicited

a woman for prostitution in an area known for sex work and afterward posed as an undercover police officer, the FBI said Wednesday. He handcuffed her, put her in leg irons and drove to Klamath Falls, Oregon, stopping to rape her on the

way, according to court documents.

After the woman escaped, Zuberi fled but was arrested by state police in Reno, Nevada, the next afternoon, the FBI said.

Zuberi is married and has a child, but the FBI did not say whether they were living in the Klamath Falls home and declined to answer questions about them. Zuberi did not follow item No. 1 in the “Operation Take Over” plan that police found in the house — a reminder to leave his phone at home, authorities say. FBI Special Agent Travis Gluesenkamp said in an affidavit that GPS location data from Zuberi’s cellphone showed he was in Seattle on July 15. Both his phone and the woman’s phone also traveled from Seattle to Klamath Falls that day, Gluesenkamp said.

Zuberi is now behind bars in Nevada, waiting to be extradited to Oregon, where he is charged in federal court with interstate kidnapping and transporting an individual across state lines with intent to engage in criminal sexual activity. □



Michael Corey Jenkins stands outside Taylor Hill Church in Braxton, Miss., March 18, 2023.

(AP Photo/HG Biggs, File)

By Michael Goldberg

Associated Press

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) — Six white former law enforcement officers in Mississippi who called themselves the “Goon Squad” pleaded guilty Thursday to a racist assault on two Black men in a home raid that ended with an officer shooting

one man in the mouth. The officers entered the house without a warrant on Jan. 24, assaulting the men with a sex object and using stun guns and other objects to abuse them over a roughly 90-minute period, court documents show. After one victim was shot and wounded in a “mock

Ex-Mississippi officers plead guilty to racist assault on 2 Black men during raid

execution” that went awry, the documents say the officers conspired to plant and tamper with evidence instead of providing medical aid.

The Justice Department launched its civil rights probe in February. The Mississippi attorney general’s office announced Thursday it had filed state charges against the six former officers, including assault, conspiracy and obstruction of justice. “The defendants in this case tortured and inflicted unspeakable harm on their victims,” U.S. Attorney General Merrick B. Garland said, adding that they “egregiously violated the civil rights of citizens who they were supposed to protect.” The civil rights

charges come after an Associated Press investigation linked the deputies to at least four violent encounters with Black men since 2019 that left two dead and another with lasting injuries. “It’s kind of a partnership in crime,” U.S. District Judge Tom Lee said about the conspiracy charges unsealed Thursday.

Court documents said the officers took on the Goon Squad nickname “because of their willingness to use excessive force and not to report it.” The two victims, Michael Corey Jenkins and Eddie Terrell Parker, filed a federal civil rights lawsuit against Rankin County in June seeking \$400 million in damages. The bullet fired into Jenkins’ mouth lacerat-

ed his tongue and broke his jaw, then exited his neck.

Those charged in the case are five former Rankin County Sheriff’s Department employees — Christian Dedmon, Hunter Elward, Brett McAlpin, Jeffrey Middleton and Daniel Opdyke — and former Richland police officer Joshua Hartfield, who was off duty when he participated in the raid.

Federal marshals took the former officers into custody Thursday, and the judge said the men will be sentenced in mid-November. The documents identified Elward as the person who shot Jenkins, and Opdyke and Dedmon as the ones who assaulted the two men with the sex object. □

Colombia begins a six-month cease-fire in hopes of forging peace

By JUAN F. VALBUENA

Associated Press

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP) —

Colombia and the National Liberation Army, or ELN, formally began a six-month cease-fire Thursday as part of a process to forge a permanent peace between the government and the country's last remaining rebel group.

The cease-fire agreement, announced June 9 during talks in Havana, comes amid skepticism among some Colombians that the peace process can fully end an insurgency dating back to the 1960s or halt the alleged involvement of the group's estimated 5,000 remaining members in drug trafficking.

The ELN leadership denies involvement in the drug trade.

The agreement also called for the creation of a broadly representative national committee to discuss a lasting solution to the conflict. The first meeting of the National Participation Committee was scheduled for later Thursday.

The cease-fire is supposed to suspend attacks between the guerrillas and the Colombian police and military throughout the coun-



Colombia's President Gustavo Petro, from left, Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Monsignor Hector Henao and National Liberation Army leader Israel Ramirez, alias Pablo Beltran, attend a ceremony to formally begin a six-month cease-fire as part of a process to forge a permanent peace between the National Liberation Army (ELN) and the government in Bogota, Colombia, Thursday, Aug. 3, 2023.

Associated Press

try, and can be extended next January if progress is made during peace negotiations.

As recently as last month, guerrillas were blamed for the slayings of three Colombian police officers on the border with Venezuela, the kidnapping of an army sergeant and her two minor children and several

bombings.

The U.N. announced Wednesday it will deploy a contingent of 68 observers to monitor the cease-fire. Farhan Haq, a spokesman for U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres, said Thursday that Colombia's peace efforts "are advancing."

Colombian President Gus-

tavo Petro, who was sworn in last year as the country's first leftist leader, gave new momentum to the country's peace efforts, and he reached the latest accord with top guerrilla commander Antonio García during the talks in the Cuban capital in June.

Petro has pushed for what he calls a "total peace"

that would demobilize all of the country's remaining rebel groups as well as its drug trafficking gangs. He has questioned whether senior ELN leaders have full control of a younger generation of commanders who he has suggested are focused more on the illegal drug trade than on political goals.

Two factions of the ELN the National Urban War Front and the Northern War Front announced their endorsement of the cease-fire in the hours before it went into effect, saying they would abide by orders of top leader García to comply with its terms.

The ELN leader warned, however, that the group reserves the right to fight if attacked.

The ELN was founded in the 1960s by union leaders, students and priests inspired by the Cuban revolution. It has been notoriously difficult for previous Colombian governments to negotiate with.

In 2016, Colombia's government signed a peace deal with the larger FARC group that ended five decades of conflict in which an estimated 260,000 people were killed. □

Highway bridge in northern China collapses due to flash floods

By SIMINA MISTREANU

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) —

A highway bridge in northern China collapsed due to flash floods triggered by heavy rains, and two cars fell into the river, state media reported Thursday, as parts of China are experiencing the worst floods in decades.

There were no known casualties as of Thursday afternoon after a bridge across Mayi River collapsed along the Harbin-Mudanjiang Highway in Heilongjiang province, according to Beijing News. Images published by local media showed two badly damaged cars floating in the water.

The bridge collapsed around 8:50 a.m. (0050 GMT) on Thursday, road

authorities said. A rescue operation was ongoing, and a section of the highway had been closed, according to state media.

China is seeing floods triggered by heavy rains in several parts of the country. Weather authorities said the capital, Beijing, recorded its heaviest rainfall in at least 140 years over the past few days as remnants of Typhoon Doksuri deluged the region, turning streets into canals where emergency crews used rubber boats to rescue stranded residents.

A second rescuer was confirmed dead on Thursday in the Beijing area and the surrounding Hebei province, where the number of casualties rose to 22. Liu Jianmin, 47, was work-

ing with Blue Sky Rescue, a nongovernmental organization focused on relief efforts, when he fell into the water in Fozizhuang Township, according to the organization.

His body was recovered later.

Another rescuer was declared dead on Wednesday after the rubber boat she was in flipped over in a rapidly flowing river.

One of the hardest hit areas was Zhuozhou, a small city in Hebei province bordering Beijing's southwest. About 1,000 rescue workers were sent to the city, and more than 125,000 people were evacuated, according to state media.

In Heilongjiang, where the highway bridge collapsed, water levels on the Mayi

River exceeded safety levels by 50 centimeters (19.7 inches), indicating ongoing risks of floods.

Meanwhile, in the east-

ern Shandong province, authorities also warned of flooding risks as water levels on the Zhangwei River continued to rise. □



In this photo released by Xinhua News Agency, rescuers use boat to evacuate trapped residents at an apartment submerged by flood water in Fangshan district on the outskirts of Beijing on Wednesday, Aug. 2, 2023.

Associated Press

'No good options': Sudan's warring sides have committed 'extensive war crimes,' Amnesty says

By Amy Magdy
Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — A leading human rights group said on Thursday Sudan's warring parties have committed "extensive war crimes" including mass killings of civilians, rape and sexual slavery of women in the ongoing conflict.

The east African country plunged into chaos in mid-April when monthslong tensions between the military and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces exploded into open fighting in the capital of Khartoum, and elsewhere across the country.

Amnesty International's 56-page report said civilians were deliberately targeted and killed and wounded. Women were raped, with some of them held in conditions "amounting to sexual slavery" mostly in the capital, Khartoum, and the western region of Darfur.

"Sexual violence has been a defining element of this conflict since the beginning," Donatella Rovera, co-author of the report, told The Associated Press. "Civilians really have no good options. It's difficult for them to leave. It's incredibly dangerous for them to stay."



Smoke rises over Khartoum, Sudan, on June 8, 2023, as fighting between the Sudanese army and paramilitary Rapid Support Forces continues.

(AP Photo, File)

Almost all rape cases were blamed on the RSF and its allied Arab militias. The report said the RSF abducted 24 women and girls - as young as 12- and held them "for several days during which they were raped by several RSF members." Rovera said that war crimes such as sexual assault are happening, "on what seems to be a large scale." While the RSF, which was born out of the notorious Janjaweed militias, was

also blamed for most of the deliberate attacks and rape cases, some members of the military were accused of the crimes, Amnesty said. Responding to the report, the military said they had established a unit to ensure targeted decisions to minimize civilian harm while the RSF denied allegations of sexual violence, as well as carrying out violent acts in West Darfur. The conflict has turned

Khartoum and other urban areas into battlefields. Darfur which had been the scene of genocidal war in the early 2000s saw some of the worst bouts of violence with the current fighting turning into ethnic clashes. The fighting forced about 4 million people to flee their homes either to safer areas inside Sudan or to neighboring countries, according to the U.N. migration agency. The violence in

Darfur was mostly blamed on the RSF and its allied Arab militias who the group said targeted the African Masalit community in the region.

The group, however, said armed men from the Masalit allegedly also targeted Arabs suspected of siding with militias.

Amnesty detailed waves of violence in West Darfur province one of five constituting the Darfur region including the killing of civilians, looting and destruction of homes and facilities such as the main hospital and markets.

"Civilians throughout Sudan are suffering unimaginable horror every single day," said Agnès Callamard, the group's secretary general. He called on the warring sides and their affiliated groups to "end their targeting of civilians, and guarantee safe passage for those seeking safety."

On April 20, an attack in Khartoum's southern neighborhood of Kalakla killed three children from the same family as they tried to escape the gunfire, the group said, adding that it was not able to determine which side was responsible for the killing. □

Iran's Revolutionary Guard runs drill on disputed islands as US military presence in region grows

By Nasser Karimi and Jon Gambrell

Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard launched a surprise military drill Wednesday on disputed islands in the Persian Gulf, just as the U.S. military increase its presence in the region over recent ship seizures by Tehran.

The drill focused primarily on Abu Musa Island, though the Guard also landed forces on the Greater Tunb Island as well, Iran's state-run IRNA news agency reported.

Swarms of small, fast boats



In this photo released Wednesday, Aug. 2, 2023, by Sepahnews of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, the Guard's troops attend a drill on Abu Musa Island, in the Persian Gulf.

(Sepahnews via AP)

took part, along with para-troopers, drones and truck-

launched surface-to-sea missile systems, footage aired on state television showed.

The drill comes as thousands of Marines and sailors on both the amphibious assault ship USS Bataan and the USS Carter Hall, a landing ship, are on their way to the Persian Gulf. Already, the U.S. has sent A-10 Thunderbolt II warplanes, F-16 and F-35 fighters, as well as the destroyer USS Thomas Hudner, to the region.

The Pentagon has said the deployment is "in response to recent attempts by Iran to threaten the free flow of

commerce in the Strait of Hormuz and its surrounding waters." Some 20% of the world's oil passes through the narrow waterway connecting the Persian Gulf to the wider world and the U.S. views it as crucial to both its national security and keeping global energy prices stable.

Seizing those islands reminds Iran's neighbors of its military might as Tehran's diplomats have been trying to convince Gulf Arab countries allied with the U.S. that "foreigners" aren't needed to secure the region. □

National Park Arikok: Aruba's biggest nature conservation

The National Park Arikok comprises almost 18 % of the island. Its rugged terrain, desert-like hills filled with tall cacti, breathtaking coastline and protected local flora and fauna welcome you to be explored. There are numerous animals to discover, for example the sea turtle who lays his eggs on the park's beaches.

The national park Arikok takes you on a memorable journey of the islands past offering unique geological, cultural and historical sites. These can all be enjoyed and explored either on your own or during guided tours. A wide variety of educational and informative programs and fun activities is available.

Did you know that four of the in total seven species of sea turtle lay their eggs on Aruba's beaches? In the national park, a Least Tern (*Sternula antillarum*) keeps a strict eye on a very special event taking place below on the beach: a majestic Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) heads back to sea after laying her eggs, while another nest laid 2 months ago by the same female hatches—a very rare occurrence of daytime nesting and hatching. Sea turtles prefer nesting in the cool and dark hours of the night. And hatchlings usually wait for the cue of cooling surface sand before emerging.

Nature Conservation

The protected area of National Park Arikok was officially established in 2000. Arikok National Park is a 34 square kilometers (7907 acres) of natural area, located at the north-eastern part of Aruba which contains examples of most of the island's flora and fauna against a backdrop of great geological complexity. We are proud to state that approximately 18% of the total land area of Aruba is assigned as a National Park, to protect and preserve the flora, fauna, geology and historical remains present within Arikok



National Park.

The Landscape

There is a great geological variety within the park. The main aspects are the rough hills of the volcanic Aruba lava formation, the mysterious rocks of the batholithic quartz-diorite/tonalite, and the limestone rocks from fossilized coral. The two tallest hills on the island are situated within the park. Jamanota hill 188 meters (617 ft) and Arikok hill 176 meters (577 ft), from which the name of the park is derived.

The line of the permanently wind-and-wave beaten North Coast is broken by several bays (boca's). Most of them are small yet impressive inlets at the mouth of dry riverbeds. Some of these bays (boca's) are spectacular sights,

adorned with white, sandy beaches and sand dunes, as is the case at Boca Prins and Dos Playa.

Arikok is also home to Conchi, Aruba's most important natural attraction; also known as The Natural Pool. The journey to the Pool is and adventure by itself and only possible by foot, horse, ATV or 4x4 vehicle.

Cultural and Historical components

There are a number of sites within the park that attest to the history of Aruba. The Caquetío Indians left rock paintings in Cunucu Arikok and Fontein Cave. The bird drawing in the park logo is a copy of one of these historical artistic expressions.

Old plantation (Cunucus) sites tell the story of an active yet challenging agri-

cultural past.

These Cunucus were also residential areas for the few families that worked the land. These families found ways to survive in the difficult conditions, and were able to erect their homes with materials found in the area. Two of these

adobe houses have been restored. Park rangers are learning many of the old building techniques in order to preserve this unique Aruban mud-house. At Cunucu Arikok and near Plantation Prins you can find these adobe houses.

Park Management

For the management of the park, a dedicated foundation "Fundacion Parke Nacional Arikok" (FPNA), known today as the Aruba National Park Foundation was established in July 2003. In February 2017, mangrove and wetland RAMSAR site #198 Spanish Lagoon was annexed to Arikok National Park due to its importance as a feeding and breeding area for water birds and as a nursery area for a variety of marine organisms. With this addition, the areas under FPNA management increased by 70 hectares while the amount of species of flora and fauna to be conserved to over 250. On December 21st, 2018 (AB 2018 no. 77) Parke Marino Aruba – currently consisting of four marine protected areas (MPAs) – was officially established and subsequently brought under management of FPNA. In 2019 management plans will be established for the new MPAs which include: coral reefs, sea grass beds, mangrove systems, a large diversity of breeding seabirds. Parke Marino Aruba also contains potential shark nursery areas, endangered sea turtle nesting beaches and marine mammal nursery areas. □



Paseo Herencia is always fun and exciting to visit



NOORD— Paseo Herencia offers a variety of shopping, dining and entertainment options in an outdoor center located in the heart of Palm Beach – walking distance from the high-rise hotels.

Shopping

The Paseo Herencia stores offer a great collection in beach wear, clothing, perfume, shoes, jewelry, souvenirs and much more. Pamper yourself by visiting Maggy's and enjoy their salon services and shop for your favorite beauty products. Aruba Aloe has that perfect gift to bring back home, all made with natural ingredients. Other brand favorites are Tommy Hilfiger, Calvin Klein, Aldo, Carmen Steffens, Nike store, Pandora and many more.

Restaurants

Start with a breakfast meal at Paseo Herencia offering unique breakfast options such as Drunk's Denial with their Make it Your Own Crêpe Bar offering sweet and savory crêpe flavors and the option to booze it up with their Mimosa crêpe (mandarin soaked in champagne), Pina Colada (pineapples in coconut rum), Bourbon Apple, Brandy Apricot, Whiskey Pear and more. Location can be found by following the bakery smell upon arrival. Another option is Seabarita offering you delicious breakfast options ranging from Huevos Rancheros to empanadas surrounded by a cozy picnic setting with streetside view. Go Argentinian style at Che Bar and try their delicious omelet with chorizo/ham, mozzarella, onions, peppers, and tomatoes served with skillet potatoes and toast. Looking for something for the whole family? Visit TGI Fridays and choose between waffle, omelets, breakfast sandwiches and tacos starting at \$8. These restaurants are also open



for lunch & dinner offering you a variety of cuisine choices. If you're looking for more unique concepts, join us for dinner at Xixon Restaurant greatly known in Miami for their Spanish inspired dishes with top notch flavors and the largest wine variety or visit The Lazy Turtle and try their exotic African dish "Kuvuta Kuku" accompanied by their tasty lazy cocktails. Coming for drinks? Sip and have a good time at the Bulldog Aruba located in the center of the Plaza. Open till late.

VIP Cinema

Visit the one-of-a-kind Caribbean Cinemas VIP on the second floor of Paseo Herencia and enjoy your favorite movies in the most comfortable reclining seats with high quality screens with the latest projection and 7.1 Dolby surround sound and not to forget their delicious buttery bag of popcorn.

Entertainment

Catch live shows from Monday to Thursday and Sunday at 8pm on the Paseo center stage and the nightly water shows at 7:30pm, 8:30pm and 9:30pm. Looking for some adrenaline? Visit the Airsoft experience located behind The Lazy Turtle. Snap Instagramable pictures at the Angel Wings located between Pandora and Free Spirit or the Flying mosaic hearts located behind King Churros.

Parking up to two hours is free when shopping, dining or catching a movie at Paseo Herencia. Just present your purchase receipt at our parking cashier.

To learn more about our specials and events, visit the Paseo Herencia website www.paseoherencia.com.



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Another Treasure of Aruba's Beaches: Sea Glass!

NOORD - It is hard to imagine this happening today, but years ago people dumped all kinds of refuse straight into the ocean, including old cars, and their household garbage, which of course included lots of glass. Over the next 30 years the pounding waves cleaned the beach, by breaking down everything but glass and pottery. The pounding waves washed the trash up and down, back and forth. Tons of polished, broken glass pieces were created by the pounding surf. These smoothed, colored glass particles then settled along the sea shore in millions, and that is why you can find these beautiful and colorful pieces on the north shore beaches of Aruba.

Especially on the strip on white sand between the famous Natural Bridge" and the huge red anchor close to "Grapefield" beach you will be able to find your own pieces of sea glass. The sea glass that was created is the product of a very long and interesting process. It can take anywhere from



10 to 30 years to make sea glass. The name for any piece of glass that finds its way to the ocean and tumbles around in the water long enough is "Sea glass."

The colorful pieces of glass

are being used for decoration, handcrafts and jewelry!

Once glass makes its way into the ocean, the glass is broken up into shards and is tumbled around in the water, where sand and other rocks act like sandpaper to smooth out its rough edges. Sometimes as the sea glass is passed through fire, it becomes fire glass, the rarest of sea glass with certain inclusions, just like precious gems.

For years, the water beat against the different kinds of trash being dumped. Glass, household appliances and even motor parts were discarded on



the beach. The waves and weather conditions wore down the overwhelming amount of garbage in the water, creating millions of beautiful smooth rocks.

It's hard to believe the short-sighted mistakes we were making that could have potentially ruined these beautiful beaches. But thanks to natural processes, the ocean transformed the trash into the sea glass. Each colored gem on the beach has its own story.

The ruby red glass stones are typically from old car tail-lights.

Then, the sapphire rocks are the remnants of broken apothecary bottles. The most common and the easiest to find are the brown (Amstel & Polar beer), green (Heineken & Balashi beer) and clear glass which are the soft much loved "soft drink" bottles.

If you like to see the sea glass for yourself, and be in awe of the power of nature, rent a car or jeep and go explore our deserted beaches on the north side of the island. Make it a fun family day! Even if we didn't mean to pollute the Beaches how we did, it is inspiring to see just how the earth can correct our mistakes.

Funny, how trash can change into treasures!

Everybody knows that you are not allowed to take local shells home, but the people working at the airport have no problem you taking sea glass home. A few of those pieces make great souvenirs. You can place them in a wine glass or large bottle for decoration and every time you look at it a smile will light up your face thinking back of your unforgettable Aruba vacation! ☐



Delphi Watersports Wins 2023 Viator Experience Award

“Catamaran Dolphin Snorkeling Cruise: Open bar, Light Lunch” Recognized Among Best in Top 20 for the Caribbean, Based on Exceptional Ratings & Reviews



Oranjestad – Delphi Watersports announced it has been recognized as a Viator Experience Award winner for “Top 20 Best in Experience” for the Caribbean region. Despite a challenging few years for the travel industry, Delphi Watersports stood out to travelers and provided an exceptional experience.

“We, at Delphi Watersports, are absolutely thrilled and deeply honored to have received the prestigious Viator Experience Award for our phenomenal catamaran Dolphin snorkeling cruise. This is a truly momentous achievement, and we couldn't be prouder of our team for their unwavering dedication and hard work.

We firmly believe that our personalized, friendly service coupled with our commitment to our customers' safety has played a significant role in making our catamaran Dolphin snorkeling cruise such a resounding success. Our unique features and innovative approach have also contributed to its massive popularity. But, we believe that the real secret to our success story lies in the exceptional professionalism, hospitality, and friendliness of our staff. They go above and beyond to ensure that every single guest who steps aboard our catamaran feels welcomed and valued, creating an unparalleled experience that is unmatched in the industry.

In addition, we must acknowledge the incredible support of our repeat guests who have played a crucial role in making this achievement possible. Their loyalty and enthusiasm for our catamaran Dolphin snorkeling cruise have been a driving force behind our success, and we are incredibly grateful for their continued patronage and trust in our services.

Their valuable feedback and suggestions have helped us to constantly improve and refine our offerings, ensuring that we are always delivering the best possible experience for our guests. We are immensely proud of the relationships we have built with our repeat guests and are thrilled to have them as a part of our Delphi Watersports

family.

We will continue to strive for excellence in everything we do, from our personalized service to our commitment to safety, to ensure that our guests have an unforgettable time aboard our catamaran Dolphin snorkeling cruise. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this incredible achievement, and we look forward to welcoming you aboard again soon!”

Viator is the world's largest travel experiences marketplace with more than 300,000 bookable tours, activities, and excursions. Now in its second year, the final rankings for the Viator Experience Awards are based on average review ratings, share of bookings with a review, and number of bookings on the Viator platform over a 12-month period (Jan-Dec 2022). Serving as the hallmark of the best experiences to book, this round of Viator Experience Awards recognizes 220 experiences, tours, and activities across 11 geographic regions - ranking the top 20 winners per region.

“No matter where you're from or where you're going, one thing is clear—the hunger for unforgettable travel experiences has never been greater,” said Adam Lawless, Communications Director, Viator. “What you do and see while traveling tends to leave a lasting mark. We're thrilled to have this award program spotlight truly exceptional tours, activities, and excursions from around the world that elevate your travel experience—creating memories you won't soon forget.”

To see traveler reviews and to book with Delphi

Watersports, visit Delphi Watersports - Tripadvisor. You can also follow the conversation on Twitter and Instagram with the hashtag #ViatorExperienceAwards.

About Delphi Watersports

We are a family business that has been established on Aruba since 1992, and we have been awarded the TripAdvisor's prestigious Award of Excellence, Hall of Fame Award, Travelers Choice Award and Experience Award during the past 9 consecutive years.

We offer an unsurpassable variety of both water sports and activities available on Aruba, specialized in giving excellent service to individuals, couples, families, groups and all kinds of events. We make sure that our customers have an unforgettable vacation experience.

Delphi Watersports. Book with us now and Experience the Difference!

About Viator

Viator, a TripAdvisor company, makes it easy to find and book unforgettable tours, activities, and excursions around the world. With more than 300,000 experiences to choose from there's always something new to discover, both near and far from home.

Your time off is precious so we focus tirelessly on quality, offering everything from simple tours to extreme adventures (and all the niche, interesting stuff in between). With ultimate flexibility, award-winning customer support, and millions of traveler reviews, you can truly do more with Viator.

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Aruba: the legend behind its name

(Oranjestad)—Most folkloric tales and legends in Aruba revolve around our indigenous ancestors, who came from mainland Venezuela, and discovered the island and made it into their new home. This particular legend tells the story of the birth of the Aruba name.

The legend follows the life of Arua, an indigenous Cacique originally from Aroa in the Falcon state in Venezuela in the year 50 AD. Arua had a son around the year 70 AD with his wife Shira, who they named Corobori. When Corobori was old enough, he joined his father on the usual boat trip to the islands of Curacao and Bonaire to gather salt.

On their way back to Mainland Venezuela, they were caught up in a heavy rain storm—a side effect from a passing, but far away, hurricane. Of course, because of the lack of motors and sail, their boat was left in the mercy of the heavy winds. After a while, the storm started to pass, and the clouds began to clear up. Finally able to see around them, the Cacique spotted land approximately an hour away. So, they started to row in that direction until they reached the coast.

Once they arrived on what they thought was Venezuela, they decided to stay the night and fix their kayak. The next morning, the Cacique ordered his son and a few warriors to go find any sign of population in the area: "Corobori," Arua said. "Don't come back without news. It's in your hands how long we stay here till we find our family. So, if you need to take a week to gather information, we will wait for you."

"Don't worry," Corobori replied. "As

soon as we have any information, we will let you know." Armed with arrows and spears, backpacks filled with food and water containers, they set off. They climbed several small hills, but no sign of a village. They crossed different dry riverbeds, but no sign of anything. When the sun finally descended, they found themselves near a fairly tall hill and decided to climb it for a better view of a village. This hill was called Pan Dushi or Orcuyo, which today we call Hooiberg.

The next morning, they could clearly see that they have landed on an island, but an unfamiliar one at that. When Corobori went back to where his father was waiting, he told him the news: "Father Arua, you have just discovered an island, but it is not Curacao or Bonaire. Far in the south, we saw the big mountains of our homeland Venezuela, which we could have never seen on the other island. This leads us to believe we are on a new island. But that's not all. When the sun came up, we saw in the distance a glowing plain, which we think may be salt."

The Cacique was pleased to hear of his son's findings. He decided to stay a couple days on the newly-discovered island in search for salt. The next morning they ascended Hooiberg again and stayed to see if they could find nearby smoke, indicating an inhabitant village. But they found nothing. So they went back to their initial arrival settlement, now known as Santo Largo in Savaneta. The next morning they hiked along the Spaans Lagoen near the Mangel Halto Beach and reached the area of Bushiri. There, they boarded their kayaks and heading to what we know now as Malmok, where they found rocks of



salt. After a couple days of exploring the island and gathering some salt rocks, they left for Venezuela, where they were reunited with their families.

Throughout the year, they travelled back and forth to Aruba, collecting salt. After a while they settled on the island, generations of families living along the coast. Corobori was the first indigenous inhabitant in our history to explore the entirety of the island.

Arua, after decades as the leader of his tribe, spent his last days on the island. Having reached 80 years old, he called for his family on his death bed. In his hammock, he said: "My children, many years have passed, and I've asked my warrior to bring me back to the island so I can laid to rest. The God of living has given me the gift of life to see my son, grandchildren and great grandchildren. But now he is calling me home. Corobori, my torch is now passed to you. Guide our people, and be the leader you were always meant to become. If one day you leave my island, do

not forget that it is also yours. This is my last wish: When I die, bury me in our maize plantation."

And so when the Cacique passed away, his wishes were granted and he was laid to rest in the area we now know as the Paradera Cemetery. Where he used to live, they built the Paradera Church.

And that is the tale of what inspired the Aruba name. In the generations that lived or travelled back and forth to the island, there were many familiar names*, like Guadiriki, a warrior who was there when the island got discovered and his son, whom he called Huliba; Corobori and his children, Corodori, Camacuri and Turibana, Masiduri; and Malmok, the 13-year-old boy who alerted the Cacique when the Caribbes attacked.

Familiar names: all these names are familiar to Arubans, as these are the names of places and plants on the island. □

Source: Un storia di e Indjan Arua (A story of the Indian Arua) by Adolf (Dufi) Kock



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 40 Invites

1 Tag sale proviso

5 Clark's colleague

9 Low cards in pinochle

11 Deed holder

13 Reach

14 Extreme

15 Try out

16 Licoricey flavoring

18 Part of a baseball count

20 Gene messenger

21 Good feature

22 Slightly open

23 Break off

24 Bill word

25 Accord

27 Flashlight, in Britain

29 Museum stuff

30 Leaves

32 Like dividends

34 Sort

35 In the area

36 "—, All Ye Faithful"

38 Subsequently

39 Freshen

41 Superlative suffixes

DOWN

1 Black cattle breed

2 Midday break

3 Sights of some lights

4 Match part

5 Writer L'Amour

6 Night fliers

7 "Oh!" and "yol"

8 Venus's sister

10 Drenched

12 Air traffic aid

17 Pay stub line

19 Was imagined

22 Mystique

24 Hospital worker

25 Half of a '60s rock group

26 Mideast peninsula

27 Letter after sigma

28 Tackle's topper

30 Campaign goal

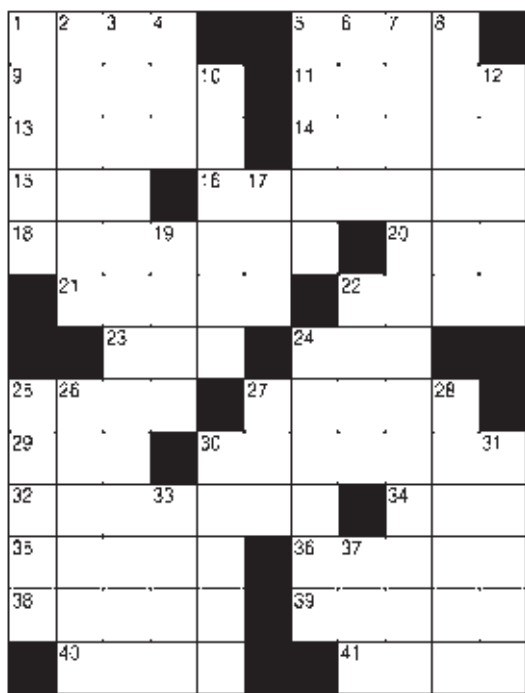
31 Distorts

33 Pond paddler

37 Semi-circular shape



Yesterday's answer



AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three I's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

8-4

CRYPTOQUOTE

GLZIRDQ LZ B ZXI RO PLXZ

I G B I X E X D Q R U X G B Z

B K D X X C W Y R U — U B Y R P X R U

H R U B Y B D I X

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: WITHOUT ICE CREAM, THERE WOULD BE DARKNESS AND CHAOS. — DON KARDONG

Prepare to flick off your incandescent bulbs for good under new US rules that kicked in this week

By David Hamilton

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) —

Get ready to say goodbye to the once ubiquitous incandescent light bulb, pioneered by Thomas Edison more than a century ago. You can thank or blame new federal energy efficiency regulations that went into full effect Tuesday. Quite possibly without you even noticing.

The Energy Department rules, which date back to the Obama administration, have been whipsawed in the political process for years. Some conservatives and Republican lawmakers long denounced them for interfering with consumer choice and placing undue burdens on business. Under former President Donald Trump, the Energy Department scrapped them in 2019; the Biden administration subsequently revived them.

Yet by the time Aug. 1



Manager Nick Reynoza holds a 100-watt incandescent light bulb at Royal Lighting in Los Angeles, Jan. 21, 2011.

(AP Photo/Jae C. Hong, File)

rolled around, the critics had gone quiet, possibly because companies and consumers have already started voting for better lighting efficiency with their wallets.

Here's what you need to know.

What changes under the new rules?

The rules establish strict

new efficiency standards for bulbs used in homes and businesses and bans the manufacture and sale of those that don't meet those requirements. Practical incandescent bulbs, which trace their origin to an 1880 Edison patent, can't meet those standards. Neither can halogen bulbs. □

Vintage computer that helped launch the Apple empire is being sold at auction

Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) —

A vintage Apple computer signed by company co-founder Steve Wozniak is being sold at auction. The Apple-1 set in motion the company that in June became the first publicly traded business to close a trading day with a \$3 trillion market value, according to RR Auction in Boston. The computer has been restored to a fully operational state and comes with a custom-built case with a built-in keyboard, the agency said.

"It's an incredibly rare commodity," said Tim Bajarin, chairman of Creative Strategies, a technology research firm with deep knowledge of the industry. "You can trace the growth of the PC industry to the Apple-1." □



This photo provided by RR Auction shows a vintage Apple computer built in the 1970s and signed by company co-founder Steve Wozniak. It is being sold at auction in Boston.

(Nikki Brickett/RR Auction via AP)

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24/7

Stock market today: Wall Street tumbles to its worst loss in months

By Stan Choe
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Wall Street tumbled to its worst drop in months on Wednesday as its torrid rally that critics called overdone lost more momentum.

The S&P 500 sank 1.4% for its sharpest tumble since April. It was the second straight loss for the index after it hit a 16-month high last week. The Dow Jones Industrial Average dropped 348 points, or 1%, while the Nasdaq composite fell 2.2%.

Prices were mixed in the bond market after Fitch Ratings cut the credit rating of the U.S. government. The repeated standoffs in Congress about whether to allow a default on the U.S. debt were just some of the reasons for Fitch's cut. The downgrade strikes at the core of the global financial system because U.S. Treasuries are considered some of the safest possible investments.

Fitch's move follows a similar one by Standard & Poor's in 2011, one that coincided with a European debt crisis to help cause stocks and bonds around the world to swing violently. So far, this most recent downgrade has caused less drama across markets. While the downgrade highlights how much debt the U.S. government has and the big challenges it faces in how to pay for Social Security, Medicare and other expenses, none of that is news for investors.

"Fitch's downgrade is much ado about nothing," said Brian Jacobsen, chief economist at Annex Wealth Management.

"Yes, it's good to call out the fiscal situation, but when a country only issues debt in its own currency, the credit rating is irrelevant. Every investment fund I've looked at specifies that US Treasury securities are allowed investments, regardless of what a credit rating agency might think." The big issues for Wall Street remain whether the economy can avoid a long-predicted reces-



A currency trader gestures in front of the screens showing the Korea Composite Stock Price Index (KOSPI), top right, at the foreign exchange dealing room of the KEB Hana Bank headquarters in Seoul, South Korea, Wednesday, Aug. 2, 2023.

(AP Photo/Ahn Young-joon)

sion, as hoped, and what's happening with corporate profits. And reports on both those questions came in mixed on Wednesday.

That offered fodder for critics who say investors were too quick to buy the belief that a soft landing is surely ahead for the economy. They've been saying Wall Street rallied too much, too quickly this year. Analysts said some of Wednesday's selling could be investors locking in profits made during the S&P 500's 19.5% run for the year through July. One report suggested hiring in the private sector remains much stronger than economists expected,

even if it slowed from the prior month.

A job market that remains solid could keep a lid on worries about a possible recession. But investors also fear a too-strong reading, which could persuade the Federal Reserve too much upward pressure still exists on inflation. Inflation has been cooling since last summer's peak, and the rising hope on Wall Street had been that the Fed won't hike rates anymore and could even begin cutting them next year.

Wednesday's stronger-than-expected jobs report from ADP could be a signal of what Friday's more com-

prehensive report from the U.S. government will say. Fed Chair Jerome Powell has highlighted Friday's numbers as a big influence on the central bank's next move in September. □



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Singer Coco Lee mourned by fans and family at Hong Kong funeral

By Kanis Leung
Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Singer and songwriter Coco Lee was being mourned by family and friends at a private ceremony Tuesday, a day after fans paid their respects at a public memorial for the Hong Kong-born entertainer who had international success.

Sobs were heard when pallbearers marched solemnly with her coffin inside the funeral hall before her cremation. Lee, who died July 5 at age 48, was known for her powerful voice and live performances.

On Monday, scores of fans dressed in black had waited outside the funeral hall in the summer heat, with some carrying flowers. The public memorial service was also attended by her relatives and friends, including singers Elva Hsiao and Jenny Tseng.

Lin Jing, a fan from Fujian province in southeast China, said she admired Lee's smile and appearance, adding: "She was really talented. She always tried to improve and she inspired women to feel independent."

Inside the funeral hall, three pink hearts made of flow-



Relatives hold a photo of Coco Lee after her funeral in Hong Kong, Tuesday, Aug. 1, 2023. (AP Photo/Billy H.C. Kwok)

ers and other floral decorations were displayed below Lee's photo.

Her close friend, Hsiao, said during the ceremony that she remembered watching Lee's performances as a student and thinking of her as a perfect idol. After they became friends in the

entertainment industry, Lee encouraged Hsiao when she was lost and treated her as "a little sister."

"She brightened my life with her happiness and bravery. I will keep preserving her spirit," Hsiao said in a quavering voice.

In a video for the memorial

service, actors and singers from Hong Kong, mainland China and Taiwan recalled their memories with Lee and mourned her death. Action star Jackie Chan said in the video that everyone was proud of her when she sang at the Oscars.

"To friends like us, Coco

was a passionate and kind friend who showed care to us. She was really a good person. That's why we are so reluctant to accept she has left us," he said.

Award-winning director Ang Lee recalled his exchanges with the late singer before the Oscars and said it was a pity she died so young. "We miss her very much. Coco, rest in peace," he said in the video.

Lee was the first Chinese singer to break into the American market, and her English song "Do You Want My Love" was a 1999 dance hit. In 2001, she sang "A Love Before Time" from Ang Lee's movie "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" at the Academy Awards, becoming the first Chinese American to perform at the Oscars.

Lee was also the voice of heroine Fa Mulan in the Mandarin version of Disney's "Mulan," and sang the Mandarin version of the movie's theme song "Reflection."

She was married to Bruce Rockowitz, a Canadian business executive in Hong Kong, and had two stepdaughters. □

Politicians urge Taylor Swift to postpone LA concerts in solidarity with striking hotel workers



Taylor Swift performs at Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara, Calif. Friday, July 28, 2023. (Jessica Christian/San Francisco Chronicle via AP, File)

Associated Press
LOS ANGELES (AP) — California's lieutenant governor and other elected officials on Tuesday urged Taylor Swift to postpone her Los Angeles concerts as a way to stand in solidarity with striking hotel workers.

Lt. Gov. Eleni Kounalakis and dozens of state and local politicians signed an open letter telling Swift that her tour makes the region's hotels money, with some properties "doubling and tripling what they charge because you are coming." Meanwhile, the letter said, many housekeepers and other hotel workers can't afford to live close to their jobs and some sleep in their

cars and risk losing their homes.

"Hotel workers are fighting for their lives. They are fighting for a living wage. They have gone on strike. Now, they are asking for your support," they wrote. "Stand with hotel workers and postpone your concerts."

Starting Thursday, Swift is scheduled to perform six sold-out shows at SoFi Stadium near Los Angeles. Her representatives didn't immediately respond to an email seeking comment on the letter.

Unite Here Local 11, which represents some 30,000 hotel workers, is negotiating for better wages, improved

health care benefits, higher pension contributions and less strenuous workloads. Contracts expired last month at more than 60 hotels, including properties owned by major chains such as Marriott and Hilton. Kounalakis, a Democrat who said she will run for governor in 2026, is the top official in the state to make the plea. She attended Swift's Eras tour in Santa Clara, California, according to Politico.

Others who signed the letter include the mayors of several cities, Assembly Majority Leader Issac Bryan and state senators Dave Min and Maria Elena Durazo. □

Tom Brady enters the world of soccer as minority owner of English club Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM, England (AP)

— NFL great Tom Brady has become a minority owner of English second-tier soccer team Birmingham and wants to bring a winning mentality to an underperforming club.

The seven-time Super Bowl champion has partnered with the club's holding company, U.S.-based Knighthead Capital Management, and becomes chairman of a new advisory board, Brady and Birmingham said Thursday.

"Maybe you are asking, 'What do you know about English football, Tom?'" Brady said in a club video. "Well, let's just say I've got a lot to learn. But I do know a few things about winning." Birmingham said Brady will "apply his extensive leadership experience and expertise across several components of the club." That includes working alongside the sports science department to advise on health, nutrition and recovery programs.

"Birmingham is an iconic



Tampa Bay Buccaneers quarterback Tom Brady stands on the field before an NFL football game against the Cleveland Browns, on Nov. 27, 2022, in Cleveland.

Associated Press

club with so much history and passion and to be part of the Blues is a real honor for me," Brady said.

Birmingham last played in the Premier League in 2011, the same year it won the English League Cup one of

two major trophies the club has captured in its 148-year history.

Brady joins a number of other American sports stars to invest in English soccer clubs.

Former NFL player J.J. Watt

recently became a minority investor in Burnley, which has just been promoted to the Premier League, while PGA Tour golfers Jordan Spieth and Justin Thomas have said they will be minority owners of Leeds after

investing in 49ers Enterprises, which is in the process of taking over the second-tier team.

Basketball star LeBron James has been a part-owner of Liverpool since 2011 because of a small stake in the club.

Brady has partnered with Knighthead Capital on several other ventures and the club's new chairman, Tom Wagner, is looking forward to Brady's "direct impact."

"Tom Brady joining the Birmingham team is a statement of intent. We are setting the bar at world class," Wagner said. "Tom is both investing and committing his time and extensive expertise."

"The goal," Wagner added, "that Tom has committed to own is to make Birmingham a respected leader in nutrition, health, wellness, and recovery across the world of football."

Brady won six Super Bowls with the New England Patriots and another with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in 2021. □

The Billie Jean King Cup has a new part-owner: Billie Jean King

**By HOWARD FENDRICH
AP Tennis Writer**

The Billie Jean King Cup has a new part-owner: Billie Jean King herself.

The International Tennis Federation and TWG Global, a holding company led by Los Angeles Dodgers principal owner Mark Walter, signed a partnership agreement Thursday for a joint venture to market and promote the women's tennis competition that used to be called the Fed Cup and was re-named to honor King in 2020.

The new entity will be called Billie Jean King Cup Limited, with the ITF holding 51% and TWG Global 49%, and it will seek new sponsorships and broadcast and commercial partnerships.

"We don't think enough people know what the Billie Jean King Cup is. It is still the largest women's global

team competition," said Ilana Kloss, a former professional tennis player and King's wife, who will chair the board of directors for the venture.

"We think it's very important to have a team focused daily on building the

Billie Jean King Cup, and investing in the brand."

This year's Billie Jean King Cup Finals will be held in Seville, Spain, on Nov. 7-12. For the second year in a row, the champions will receive the same prize money as the winners of the

men's Davis Cup.

"We've made a commitment to be bigger, better and bolder. And this is just kind of following on with that," said David Haggerty, the president of the ITF.

The intention, Haggerty said, is "to really make sure that we make this a sustainable model that we grow, to give women the same opportunities that men have, as well," including as players, coaches and national federation officials in tennis.

"It really is a true partnership. I mean, obviously, the ITF have incredible expertise in running events, knowing the rules, working with the nations all of the things that are critical to the competition," Kloss said. "Our hope is that we can bring some expertise and more focus on a daily basis on the selling of the sponsor-

ship, media rights, getting the word out. I guess no marriage is perfect, but this one is pretty darn good."

Neither Haggerty nor Kloss, who both spoke to The Associated Press in a video call Thursday, would disclose the amount of money being invested by Walter's holding company. Kloss called it "significant and substantial."

King and Walter have been business partners in the past, including in the Dodgers ownership and a new women's professional hockey league launching in January.

Kloss, who won Grand Slam titles in women's doubles and mixed doubles in 1976 and is the former chief executive officer of World TeamTennis, said King has "always been about making it better for others." □



Los Angeles Dodgers owner & chairman Mark Walter, left, introduces tennis champion Billie Jean King at a news conference in Los Angeles, Sept. 21, 2018.

Associated Press



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American star Chloe Dygert romps to individual pursuit title at cycling world championships

By Dave Skretta
Associated Press

Chloe Dygert insisted in the week leading up to the cycling world championships that she wasn't quite in form yet. The American track star was still by far the best in the world Thursday. The 26-year-old from Indiana, who has overcome a career-threatening crash and several other setbacks over the past three years, roared to victory in the individual pursuit for the first elite gold medal of worlds. In fact, Dygert was so far ahead of her opponent in the finals, defending champion Franziska Brausse, that she passed the German on the final lap.

Dygert stopped the clock in 3 minutes, 17.926 seconds, a time that was slowed by the pass and would otherwise have challenged for her own world record. Brausse finished more than eight seconds back for silver, and Bryony Botha of New Zealand rallied from nearly two seconds down to beat Britain's Neah Evans for bronze.

"It's been a long three years to get back here," Dygert said. "The goal is always to go faster, but this ride felt good."

In the women's team sprint, the German trio of Lea Sophie Friedrich, Pauline Grabosch and Emma Hinze broke the world record in the finals with a time of 45.848 seconds. Britain took second in a potential preview of next year's finals at the Paris Olympics, and defending Olympic champion China beat the Netherlands for bronze.

William Tidball of Britain won the men's scratch race before a home crowd in Glasgow, Scotland, with his dramatic last-lap pass.



USA's Chloe Dygert celebrates winning gold in the Women's Elite Individual Pursuit on day one of the 2023 UCI Cycling World Championships at the Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome, Glasgow, Scotland, Thursday Aug. 3, 2023.



Netherlands' Daniel Abraham Gebru, left, celebrates winning the Men's C5 Scratch Race with compatriot Martin van de Pol on day one of the 2023 UCI Cycling World Championships at the Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome, Glasgow, Scotland, Thursday Aug. 3, 2023.

(Tim Goode/PA via AP)

Kazushige Kuboki of Japan took the silver medal and Tuur Dens of Belgium earned the bronze.

Dygert was widely considered the best in the world in endurance events heading into the 2020 time trial world championships in Italy. And she was well ahead of the winning pace that day before her bike wiggled

on a right-hand turn on the roads near Imola, and Dygert crashed heavily over a guardrail and down a steep embankment. She sustained serious injuries to her leg that required multiple operations, and while Dygert managed to come back to compete at the pandemic-delayed Tokyo Games, she ac-

quired at Dygert to "catch her" — because Dygert suddenly found herself on the same straightaway with her competition. She moved around Brausse on the outside to claim the gold medal.

"Wearing the rainbow stripes is always an honor," Dygert said, "and I'm proud to be able to wear them again."

It was an emphatic start for Dygert to a busy world championships, which for the first time are bringing together nearly all of the cycling disciplines in one place and one time. Dygert will also compete in the team pursuit in the velodrome, then head outside for the road race and time trial, two events in which she recently won national titles.

Earlier in the day, defending men's team pursuit champion Britain crashed out in qualifications when Charlie Tanfield fell alone on the final bend and was unable to cross the finish line. Tanfield was able to walk off the track on his own, but British Cycling said in a statement that he was taken to the hospital for "further treatment."

The Danish team of Niklas Larsen, Carl-Frederik Brevort, Frederik Madsen and Lasse Leth was the fastest qualifier with a time of 3:46.816. That was more than 2 seconds ahead of New Zealand and another 3-plus seconds ahead of Italy.

In men's team sprint qualifying, the heavily favored Dutch team of Jeffrey Hoogland, Harrie Lavreysen and Roy van den Berg had the fastest time of 42.046 seconds. Australia qualified second and Poland was third. □

knowledge later that she was nowhere near her best level. That was still a ways off. Dygert also had to deal with the Epstein-Barr virus, a heart procedure to treat a condition she had dealt with for a decade, and then another crash during a training camp earlier this year that kept her off the bike until March. Hard to imagine what Dygert's best could be after her performance Thursday.

After setting the fastest qualifying time, Dygert roared from the standing start and opened up a half-second lead on Brausse by the end of the first lap. Perfectly still on her pink handlebars, and with Dygert's trademark pink socks spinning in perfect rhythm, she stretched the lead to 1.2 seconds by the first kilometer and tripled that advantage by the end of the second.

At that point, U.S. coach Gary Sutton began yelling